GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3011
ANSWERED ON:20.12.2004
IMPACT OF URBANISATION ON HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the unabated urbanization in the country resulting into a number of problems relating to public health and environment;

(b) if so, the action plan taken up to control this situation specifically in the mega cities of the country; and

(c) the extent to which the plan has been successful?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) to (c) As per the Registrar of India (Statistical Outline of India 2002-03), levels of urbanization have increased from 17% in 1951 to 28% in 2001. The urbanization has posed several problems to environment, including air and water pollution, disposal of Municipal Solid Waste and Sewage. The water quality of rivers and lakes have been adversely affected due to disposal of Municipal sewage. Urban air quality has been stressed by increasing vehicular emissions, burning of bio-mass and bio-fuels within the urban areas. Various steps have been taken by the Government to check pollution, which include introduction of unleaded petrol, usage of cleaner fuel for motor vehicles, use of beneficiated coal in thermal power plants and restriction on the use of bio-fuels. Due to the interventions of the Government, the levels of air pollutants have been contained, except the levels of Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM). Similarly, action has also been taken to set up sewage treatment plants and create facilities for handling of Municipal Solid Waste. City-specific Action Plans have been evolved for the various mega cities and are at the different stages of implementation. Action Plans have also been evolved for containing the air pollutants and for the management of Municipal Solid Waste in respect of metro cities and State capitals. No conclusive evidence of cause-effect relationship of the pollutants to the health manifestation is available in the country.